

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PARAMA 00192 111437Z
ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
 USIA-06 OMB-01 TRSE-00 ARAE-00 /069 W
 -----111441Z 125405 /47

P R 111316Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3210
INFO AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARAMARIBO 0192

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, NS
SUBJ: SOEMITA AFFAIR: GOVERNMENT'S CASE LEAKS

REF : PARAMARIBO 0185

1. APPARENTLY AUTHORITATIVE TEXT OF ENTIRE PROSECUTION DOSSIER
DETAILING CORRUPTION CHARGES AGAINST AGRICULTURE MINISTER
SOEMITA WAS PUBLISHED BY LOCAL NEWS AGENCY MARCH 10 AND SOLD
ON PARAMARIBO'S NEWSSTANDS. POLICE ARE REPORTED TO HAVE SUB-
SEQUENTLY ROUNDED UP UNSOLD COPIES IN EFFORT TO RESTRICT
DISTRIBUTION, BUT MARCH 11 PRESS CARRIES EXTENSIVE EXCERPTS
FROM DOSSIER INCLUDING ATTORNEY GENERAL'S LETTER TO PARLIA-
MENT (MARCH 3) ASKING THAT SOEMITA BE DECLARED SUBJECT TO
PROSECUTION AND DECLARATIONS OF GOVERNMENT WITNESSES AGAINST
SOEMITA.

2. THERE IS WIDESPREAD BELIEF THAT PARLIAMENT WILL NOW HAVE
TO ACT QUICKLY TO DECIDE WHETHER SOEMITA SHOULD BE PROSECUTED.
ATTORNEY GENERAL'S LETTER ASKED FOR DECISION WITHIN ONE WEEK
(WHICH HAS NOW EXPIRED) AND MINISTER OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS BRUMA
TOLD AMBASSADOR PARLIAMENT MUST ACT SOON--PERHAPS BY EARLY
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PAGE 02 PARAMA 00192 111437Z

NEXT WEEK--BECAUSE OTHERS BESIDE SOEMITA ARE INVOLVED.

3. ACCORDING TO DOSSIER AS PUBLISHED, GOVERNMENT'S CASE
CHARGES SOEMITA WITH EXTORTION AND ACCEPTANCE OF PAYMENTS IN
CONNECTION WITH THE ASSIGNMENT OF LAND PARCELS IN NICKERIE
DISTRICT. WITNESSES INCLUDE NOT ONLY THOSE WHO WERE ASKED TO
MAKE PAYMENTS BUT ALSO ALLEGED INTERMEDIARIES WHO SAY THEY

TRANSMITTED PAYMENTS TO SOEMITA.

4. ATTORNEY GENERAL'S LETTER CLEARLY POINTS OUT TO PARLIAMENT THAT MEMBERS ARE BEING ASKED NOT TO JUDGE WHETHER SOEMITA IS GUILTY OF CHARGES AGAINST HIM OR NOT, BUT ONLY WHETHER SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE EXISTS TO PROCEED WITH PROSECUTION AGAINST HIM. IF PARLIAMENT AGREES, QUESTION REMAINS WHETHER SOEMITA WILL STAY ON AS MINISTER WHILE CASE PROCEEDS. AND SUBSEQUENT ALIGNMENT OF PARTIES AND PERSONALITIES IN PARLIAMENT AND EFFECT ON GOVERNMENT COMBINATION'S ABILITY TO ENACT DESIRED LEGISLATION IS STILL UNCLEAR.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 11-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Litigation History:
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TAGS: PINT, NS, (SOEMITA, WILLIAM)
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